

Senate Agricultural Committee

Thursday, March 1, 2007, 9 a.m.

Room 110 Farnum Building

Michigan's Forests

- Michigan's 19 million acres of forests cover more than half of our State's landbase, predominately in the northern two-thirds of the state
- The forest resource is owned predominately by the private sector (65%). The remaining 35% of the forest resource is publicly owned (approximately 21% state owned and 14% federally owned)
- State forestlands are managed co-managed by the Forest Mineral and Fire Management and Wildlife divisions

Forest Mineral and Fire Management Division

- Our Forest Mineral and Fire Management team has 5 main programmatic sections including:
 - Forest Resources Management - forest planning/operations, forest health, inventory and monitoring
 - Recreation and Trails - hiking, snowmobile and off-road vehicle trails and campgrounds
 - Resource Protection and Cooperative Programs - wildfire prevention and suppression on state and private forestlands including a national recognized and utilized forest fire experiment station, forestry and natural resource assistance to private landowners, communities, cities and citizens
 - Mineral and Land Management - oversee the State's metallic, non-metallic, oil and gas resources
 - Program Services - employee services and accounting
- Our operational personnel in the 16 management units across the state work to implement these major programmatic areas
- We collaborate with a broad range of stakeholders including other state, federal and local agencies, user groups and citizens

Forest Development Fund

- Downturn in revenue because of declining timber markets over the last year.
- Trend predicted to continue
- Fiscal Year 2008 reductions of \$8.8 million will result in maintaining vacancies, eliminating timber marking contracts, reducing equipment purchases including fire equipment, eliminating financial support to the conservation districts, scaling back on forest health and regeneration efforts

Forest Finance Authority

- An independent finance authority appointed by the Governor
- “Working forest” for the 21st Century
- \$26 million securitization

Forest Management Advisory Committee

- Advise the DNR Director
- Members include the DNR, industry, university, government agencies, and forestry/conservation/environmental groups (20 members)
- Assist the DNR in balancing environmental, social and economic issues
- Identify potential long-term threats to forest resources
- Address management problems, opportunities and challenges
- Provide active participation in DNR’s forest resource planning activities and forest certification
- Identify appropriate partnerships
- Keep Michigan more competitive in the global marketplace

Michigan’s Conservation Summit

- Natural Resources Commission called together at the request of the Citizens Committee for Michigan State Parks and the Forest Management Advisory Council
- On February 7, 2007 nearly 200 people from across the state representing the widest range of conservation, outdoor, recreation, environmental and agricultural groups assembled in the last decade participated in the first-ever Michigan Conservation Summit in Lansing to discuss stable funding for Michigan’s natural resources.
- As a result of this summit, a coalition (currently led by MUCC, Heart of the Lakes, The Nature Conservancy and the Michigan Environmental Council) will explore how best to “invest” in conservation in Michigan.

Sustainable Forest Management – Forest Certification

- State forest system awarded dual certification by the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) and the Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI) in January 2006
- Certification ensures Michigan’s state forests are, and will be, managed in a responsible manner into the future and challenges us to continual improvement through periodic re-verification and re-certification